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Mr. Christopher N. Ruszkowski
Chief Officer, T L E U
Delaware Department of Education
401 Federal Street, Suite #2
Dover, DE 19901-3639

RE: Teacher and Leader Incentives – Race to the Top Plan Initiatives

Dear Christopher,

Per your request, please find attached Christina's plan to utilize Race to the Top funding identified as incentives for teachers and leaders. We are excited about implementing these initiatives and will be moving forward immediately to reach out to our staff in the identified buildings so that they are aware of the potential incentives prior to the Voluntary Transfer period which opens in March. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions on this.

Thank you for your ongoing support for Christina.

Sincerely,

Freeman L. Williams, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Encl.

cc. Mr. Mark Murphy, Secretary of Education
Mr. David Davis, President Christina Education Association
Christina Board of Education
Dr. Fara Zimmerman, Deputy Superintendent
Mr. Robert Silber, Chief Operating Officer
Ms. Kelli Racca

Freeman L. Williams, Ed. D., Superintendent



MEMO

2/8/2013

RACE TO THE TOP INITIATIVES

In order to better define how the Christina School District will approach teacher and leader incentives, we offer the following plan. Our intent is to begin implementation immediately.

Strategy: Increase the concentration of highly-effective teachers and leaders in high needs schools

TEACHER INCENTIVES

Initiative: Develop incentives for teachers to work in high needs schools.

In the original RTTT plan for Christina, the District identified several potential incentives for teachers to work in high needs schools. These were identified ahead of focus group work that the Christina Education Association was going to do to confirm or to propose additional options beyond compensating teachers directly for performance.

The opportunities included in the original plan as a draft were the following :

- Master Level College Credits

- National Board Certification

- Support for teachers to become specialized in certifications including Bilingual Ed, advanced Mathematics, Sciences, etc.

The allocation of funds for teacher incentives was \$ 208,000 plus OEC's and indirect costs to total of approximately \$ 260,000 over three years.

Since the time the District level Race to the Top plan was written, Christina has had three schools become part of the State of Delaware's Partnership Zone – Stubbs Elementary, Glasgow High School, and Bancroft Elementary.

Each school wrote a plan to 'transform' practices and operations in order to dramatically improve student achievement in a short time frame. All three plans included a two-year commitment between the teachers in those schools and the District. The commitment provided for additional compensation for additional professional development, additional compensation for extended school hours, protection from reduction in force if necessitated due to district wide enrollment declines, and in return teachers would not transfer out of their PZ school for two years.

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Two of the PZ school agreements, those at Stubbs and Glasgow, are now expiring and teachers in those schools are in the process of investigating their options for transfer to other schools within the District.

Bancroft's PZ plan included a Professional Enterprises stipend of \$ 1000 per year for all teachers at Bancroft for the length of the agreement. This "incentive" has been praised by the teachers, Bancroft building administrators, as well as by the Association for its balanced recognition of professionalism within the teacher corps. Many of these stipends have been used for materials for the classroom, for IPADs (or other technology) , or for outside training /conference fees.

Stability in the instructional staff and leadership for the Partnership Zone schools was identified as key for success for students. Both GHS and Stubbs made AYP in the 2011/2012 school year and the goal is set for the schools to make AYP for the second year in 2012/2013. While achieving AYP two years running will remove these schools from the Partnership, growing and sustaining a culture of academic achievement in both schools is the longer range goal for the District. Encouraging effective staff to remain in these schools will support this goal.

In order to offer a similar professional acknowledgement of the challenges faced by teachers in the Partnership Zone schools, Christina would like to amend the District level RTTT plan to redefine how the teacher incentives for high needs schools will be allocated. The District would like to provide the \$1000 Professional Enterprise Stipend to all teachers at Stubbs and Glasgow who have a rating of "Effective" based on DPAS II Components I-IV for the 2012-2013 SY. The District will use Component V as a basis for future inclusion when the component has been fully implemented and fidelity validated.

As currently allocated in the grant budget, funds would be available for approximately 90 teachers and administrators to receive \$ 1000 in professional enterprise stipends for two years. Current funding would adequately cover these stipends in both Glasgow and Stubbs.

These stipends will become available June 1, 2013 to teachers who choose to remain at Stubbs and GHS for the 2013/2014 school year. The stipend will become available again in May 2014 for teachers who again choose to remain at both schools and continue to receive the "Effective" rating as well as any teachers who transfer into these schools for the 2013/2014 school year and are rated as "effective". The District would like to pursue a proposal to reallocate other Race to the Top funding to potentially expand this initiative to include stipends for the teaching staff in the four Focus Schools. (est. \$225,000 per year for two years).

LEADERSHIP INCENTIVES

Initiative: Create hiring incentives for leadership in high needs schools.

Under the same Strategy as Teacher Incentives – Increase the concentration of highly-effective teachers and leaders in high needs schools - the grant application included possible leader incentives of signing bonuses of \$10,000 to attract leaders to two high needs schools per year. The grant application also included an annual stipend of \$ 2,500 per year for two years for two positions identified as leadership roles in high needs schools.

A total of \$ 94,000 plus OEC's and indirect costs to total of approximately \$ 113,500 was identified in the grant for incentives for leaders to remain in or to apply for positions in high needs schools over the same time period as the teacher incentive activities.

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As of January 2013, the District had not accessed these funds. But in December 2012, the Christina School District Board of Education approved Administrator Compensation Plan proposed for FY 2013. A component of this plan recognized the importance of attracting and retaining Leadership for our Identified Schools. The plan called for compensation plan approved by the board included the following:

Identified Schools

"Identified Schools" (e.g. Focus Schools and Partnership Zone Schools), carry significant additional responsibilities. In order to Attract and Retain qualified Administrators to work in these programs, an increase in compensation of up to \$5,000 per annum is recommended.

The plan approved by the Christina Board of Education proposes that Principals and Assistant Principals in Identified Schools would be eligible for an annual stipend of up to \$5,000. Annual expense for 2013 is projected to be \$70,000. Christina would propose to utilize the funds identified in the initiatives outlined above plus additional indirect cost funding from the RTTT grant to fund these increases for all identified school leaders for two years - SY 2012/2013 and 2013/2014. A total of \$140,000 is projected.

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